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USSR - WEST GERMANY: Moscow continues to display concern that West Germany's parliament may reject Chancellor Brandt's Eastern treaties.

The Soviet press has attacked the Christian Democrat/Christian Social opponents of the treaties, warning of the "serious" consequences that could befall West Germany should the treaties be defeated. For the first time, Izvestia on 13 March linked publicly implementation of the Berlin accord with ratification of the treaties.

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Although "power struggle" probably is too strong a phrase to describe the politicking that accompanies any policy initiative, there is evidence that some Soviet leaders, particularly politburo member Shelest, have reservations concerning detente with Bonn. Non-ratification is unlikely to cost Brezhnev his job as party chief, however, because some of those who might agree with Shelest on detente could support Brezhnev on other issues. It would, however, prompt Brezhnev to be more cautious toward pushing detente than he has for the last 18 months.

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EAST GERMANY - WEST GERMANY: Perhaps in response to Soviet pressure, East German party leader Honecker endorsed the Eastern treaties in his strongest terms to date as the linchpin of European detente in a speech on 10 March.

Honecker also stressed that ratification would contribute to inter-German rapprochement. Honecker's call for coexistence of the two German states elicited a warm response from Bonn, which claimed that the GDR had "accepted the need" to normalize relations with West Germany.

East German State Secretary Kohl went to unusual lengths during talks with West Germany's Bahr last week to describe Pankow's current efforts to improve the negotiating atmosphere. Kohl then bemoaned West German criticism of the GDR, claiming that such attacks were ammunition for those East German leaders who still oppose Pankow's "new policy." Kohl added, however, that the most efficacious way for Bonn to secure East German cooperation would be to end its opposition to GDR membership in international organizations [redacted]

Meanwhile, unofficial East German spokesman von Berg reportedly is in Bonn to propose that the two sides initiate informal talks on a general treaty.

[redacted]
[redacted] Bahr and other West German leaders who had doubted that Pankow would agree to negotiations on an umbrella treaty probably will question how far the GDR will go to meet their requirements. They believe that Pankow must also make specific concessions--such as liberalized travel in restricted border areas and greater opportunities for East German visits to the FRG--if the opposition to the treaties is to be thwarted. [redacted]

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